

Message Text

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SUBJECT: EDITORIAL IN THE IRISH PRESS JULY 4, 1978

FOLLOWING EDITORIAL APPEARED IN THE IRISH PRESS, JULY 4,
1978 UNDER THE HEADING NEW MIDDLE EAST TALKS.

THERE HAS BEEN A GREAT DEAL MORE TALK OF WAR THAN OF
PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST FOR A LONG TIME. PROBABLY
FEW OBSERVERS BELIEVED THAT U.S. VICE-PRESIDENT
MONDALE'S VISIT TO ISRAEL AND EGYPT WOULD PRODUCE ANY
SPEEDY REACTION.

IT IS GRATIFYING THAT MR. MONDALE HAS BEEN ABLE TO
PERSUADE PRESIDENT SADAT TO SEND HIS FOREIGN MINISTER,
MR. KAMEL, TO LONDON IN THE MIDDLE OF THIS MONTH TO
TAKE PART IN TALKS WITH ISRAEL AND UNITED STATES
REPRESENTATIVES. THE ISRAELI SPOKESMAN IS EXPECTED
TO BE FOREIGN MINISTER MOSHE DAYAN, AND AMERICA'S
VIEWS WILL BE STATED BY SECRETARY OF STATE CYRUS VANCE.

THE AGREEMENT TO MEET MAY NOT APPEAR AT FIRST SIGHT TO
HOLD OUT ANY POSITIVE HOPES FOR A SETTLEMENT, BUT IT
DOES REPRESENT A DEPARTURE FROM A LONG-STANDING POSITION
OF STALEMATE AND MERITS MR. MONDALE'S DESCRIPTION OF
IT AS "A VERY SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT...AN IMPORTANT
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FIRST STEP FOR A BROAD REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF WHERE WE
GO FROM HERE.

BOTH EGYPT AND ISRAEL HAVE ALREADY REJECTED EACH OTHER'S
PROPOSALS, SO THAT THE AGREED MEETING WOULD
SUGGEST THE EMERGENCE OF A LITTLE MORE
FLEXIBILITY ON THE PART OF MR. SADAT AND MR. BEGIN.

IT IS TRUE THAT EGYPT HAS MODIFIED ITS STAND ON THE JORDAN WEST BANK AND THE GAZA STRIP TO PROVIDE FOR A UNITED NATIONS AND AMERICAN PRESENCE IN BOTH AREAS, IT DOES REPRESENT AN IMPORTANT STEP FORWARD. PRESIDENT SADAT HAS NOT YET CONFIRMED THAT THIS IS SO. HE MADE CLEAR AT HIS PRESS CONFERENCE YESTERDAY THAT EGYPT IS DEEPLY CONCERNED WITH FINDING A SOLUTION TO THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION AND SEES THE TWO AREAS AS SUITABLE FOR THE SETTING UP OF A PALESTINIAN COMMUNITY HAVING CLOSE LINKS WITH JORDAN.

IT IS A PITY THAT PRESIDENT CARTER AND PRESIDENT SAGAT ARE APPARENTLY NOT TO MEET DURING MR. CARTER'S VISIT TO EUROPE LATER THIS MONTH. ONE OF THEM WILL BE IN AUSTRIA, THE OTHER IN WEST GERMANY AT APPROXIMATELY THE SAME TIME. SURELY IT SHOULD BE POSSIBLE TO REARRANGE THE TWO LEADERS' SCHEDULES TO PROVIDE FOR A MEETING ON A MATTER THAT IS OF SUCH VITAL CONCERN TO SO MANY COUNTRIES, APART FROM THOSE MOST CLOSELY INVOLVED.

AMERICAN-ISRAELI RELATIONS HAVE BEEN SLIGHTLY STRAINED OF LATE BECAUSE OF WHAT THE WHITE HOUSE REGARDS AS JEWISH INTRANSIGENCE ON THE DEMANDED WITHDRAWAL FROM CAPTURED ARAB TERRITORY, BUT MR. MONDALE BOTH ON SUNDAY AND YESTERDAY MADE CONCILIATORY SPEECHES IN
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JERUSALEM.

HE REPEATED THAT THE ISRAELIS MUST WITHDRAW FROM THE TERRITORIES THEY CAPTURED IN 1967 AND ALLOW THE PALESTINIANS "THE RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DETERMINATION OF THEIR OWN DESTINY". BEFORE FLYING OUT TO EGYPT, HOWEVER, MR. MONDALE EMPHASISED WHEN HE SPOKE OF AMERICAN-ISRAELI RELATIONSHIPS, "WE HAVE DIFFERENCES BUT THEY ARE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FRIENDS".
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